

REMARKS

Claims 1-67 were pending in the above-identified application. Of these, claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-14, 16-25, 27-30, 31-33, 35, 37-40, 42-44, 46-48, 49, 50, 52, 53, and 63-67 stand rejected; claims 3, 8, 15, 36, 41, 45, and 51 are objected to; and claim 54-62 are allowed. Applicants, having amended the application, respectfully request reconsideration.

Allowable Subject Matter

The examiner objected to claims 3, 8, 15, 26, 36, 41, 45, and 51 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but noted that these claims would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of any base and intervening claims. Per the examiner's suggestion:

- i. base claim 1 is amended to include the language of allowable claim 3, such that claim 1 now includes the subject matter of allowed claim 3;
- ii. claim 8 is amended to include the subject matter of base claim 1;
- iii. claim 15 is amended to include the subject matter of base claim 1;
- iv. base claim 19 is amended to include the language of allowable claim 26, such that claim 19 now includes the subject matter of allowed claim 26;
- v. base claim 29 is amended to include the language of allowable claim 36, such that claim 29 now includes the subject matter of allowed claim 36;
- vi. base claim 39 is amended to include the language of allowable claim 41, such that claim 39 now includes the subject matter of allowed claim 41; and
- vii. claims 45 and 51 are each amended to include the subject matter of base claim 39.

The foregoing amendments place allowable claims 3, 8, 15, 26, 36, 41, 45, and 51 in independent form in conformance with the examiner's suggestions. Claims 3, 8, 15, 26, 36, 41, 45, and 51 are therefore in condition for allowance.

Claims 54-62 are allowed.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-13, 16-24, 27-29, 31-33, 37-40, 42-44, 48, 49, 52, 53, and 63-67 stand

rejected as anticipated by Perner (US Pat. No. 5,818,261). The foregoing amendments overcome these rejections as follows:

- i. claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 3, and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 3 was deemed to be allowable;
- ii. claims 2, 4-7, 9-13, and 16-18 depend from amended claim 1, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 1 is allowable;
- iii. claim 19 is amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 26, and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 26 was deemed to be allowable;
- iv. claims 20-24, 27, and 28 depend from amended claim 19, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 19 is allowable;
- v. claim 29 is amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 36, and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 36 was deemed to be allowable;
- vi. claims 31-33, 37, and 38 depend from amended claim 29, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 29 is allowable;
- vii. claim 39 is amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 41, and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 41 was deemed to be allowable;
- viii. claims 40, 42-44, 48, 49, 52, and 53 depend from amended claim 39, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 39 is allowable; and
- ix. claims 63-67 are canceled.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 14, 25, 30, 35, 46, 47, and 50 stand rejected under §103 as unpatentable over Perner in view of Boudry (5,644,254). The foregoing amendments overcome these rejections as follows:

- i. Claim 14 depends from amended claim 1, which now includes the subject matter of allowable claim 3. Claim 14 is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim

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3 was deemed to be allowable.

- ii. Claim 25 depends from amended claim 19, which now includes the subject matter of allowable claim 26. Claim 25 is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 3 was deemed to be allowable.

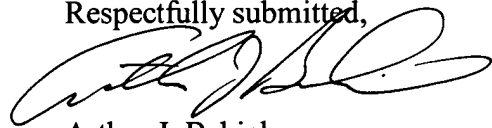
Claims 30 and 35 each depend from amended claim 29, which now includes the subject matter of allowable claim 36. Claims 30 and 35 are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 36 was deemed to be allowable.

Claim 46, 47, and 50 each depend from amended claim 39, which now includes the subject matter of allowable claim 41. Claims 46, 47, and 50 are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 41 was deemed to be allowable.

CONCLUSIONS

In light of the foregoing remarks and amendments, the pending claims are in condition for allowance; accordingly, Applicants' respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the examiner's next action is other than the allowance of the pending claims, the examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at (925) 621-2113.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on 2/21/06

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